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**Statement of the Honorable Tim Bishop**  
Democratic Substitute to H.R. 2893  
*Gasoline for America's Security Act of 2005*  
October 7, 2005

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Stupak, and the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Boucher, for their leadership in offering this substitute and for yielding the time. I am proud to join them in offering a substitute with real teeth that combats price gouging head-on.

I rise in strong support of this substitute for two reasons: Unlike the underlying legislation, it contains a meaningful deterrent to price-gouging; and it provides an effective strategy to expand refinery capacity.

Regardless of how we voted, we can all agree there were some good provisions in the first energy bill. But Katrina exposed its shortcomings as well as vulnerabilities that still exist in the energy market after President Bush signed the Energy Policy Act into law last month.

We can also agree the hurricane made it harder to meet the challenge of delivering relief to families struggling to pay their energy bills, and that a rash of price-gouging compounded this problem. While middle-class families spend more of their hard-earned dollars at the gas pumps, unscrupulous executives are reaping the profits off the backs of American consumers.

Our substitute takes direct aim at these challenges by creating a strong deterrent to price gouging that keeps gas prices stable. The underlying bill sets an \$11,000 fine for price gouging. While that may sound like a lot to a middle class family, it is only a slap on the wrist to oil and gas companies that typically earn multi-million dollar profits each and every week – like Exxon-Mobil, which earned \$7 billion in profits in just the second quarter this year.

In contrast, this substitute deters price-gouging at every stage of production – not just the retail phase – by strengthening penalties against oil and gas conglomerates, distributors, and retailers that amount to three times the amount of profits gained during the offense, or up to \$3 million. Better still, our substitute counts each day of price-gouging as a separate violation.

While our price gouging countermeasures offer relief to American families in the short-run, our substitute spells out a strategic approach to expanding the number of refineries to keep prices down over the long-run. We can achieve this by giving industry, states and local governments the tools they need to work together toward building new refineries that can produce a steady source of fuel that shields our economy from vulnerability to terrorism and natural disasters.

Additionally, by creating a new national Strategic Refinery Reserve, our nation will have for the first time an effective policy to refine and store gasoline reserves. The underlying legislation fails to create such a reserve. A national reserve to sustain our economy through the most difficult of circumstances is a matter of national security.

Mr. Chairman, now is the time we must stand up to profiteers by assuring hard-working American families that Congress is standing up for their interests, not the oil companies’.

I urge my colleagues to support this substitute that protects American taxpayers and our national security. Again, I commend Mr. Stupak and Mr. Boucher for their efforts and yield back the balance of my time.